



Haralson County School System

Board of Education

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Dr. Janice W. Boatwright
Superintendent

April 27, 2000

Director of Food Distribution Division
Food and Nutrition Service
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302

Dear Sir:

I am writing regarding the USDA'S "Proposal for Change" of February 14, 2000, regarding the re-engineering of the Food Distribution Program. My school district is in support of the program as it is. We feel the change will severely affect our program.

Of particular concern to us is the use of commercial labels. How will we know if we have our full allotment of USDA foods? How will managers in individual schools be able to distinguish USDA foods from purchased foods? How can we determine the monetary contribution of USDA foods to the meal service when we can not tell whether or not they are using USDA foods? If we lose the ability to identify the true contribution of USDA foods to the meal service, could this jeopardize or negatively impact program funding received into our school system?

Also of concern, if commercial labels are used how will we be assured of domestic foods being used. This leads to product safety questions. Imported foods may not be as safe as domestic foods. (Recent beef from England and strawberries from Argentina were unsafe.)

These are just a few of my concerns. The 16 proposed changes will affect 60,000 school food authorities nationwide. I feel we need more information before changes are made. If a change is necessary, several districts should be chosen and pilot programs should be established for a 1-2 year period. From the results, a program of change could be better implemented, so that programs across the country would not be negatively impacted.

Sincerely

HARALSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Diane Norton
School Nutrition Director